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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 002202

SIPDIS

NEA FOR BURNS/SATTERFIELD  
NSC FOR ABRAMS/DANIN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/15/2014

TAGS: [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#) [PBTS](#) [IS SETTLEMENTS](#) [ISRAELI PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS](#) [GOI](#) [INTERNAL](#)  
SUBJECT: A DAY OF SETBACKS FOR OUTPOST SUPPORTERS

REF: A. TEL AVIV 1946

[1](#)B. TEL AVIV 1391

Classified By: Economic Counselor Theodore A. Mann for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

This message has been cleared by ConGen Jerusalem.

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: A day after PM Sharon reiterated his commitment to removing unauthorized outposts in Washington, outpost activists and supporters woke up on April 15 to the news that the GOI had removed a few more sites overnight and that the Attorney General ordered some settlement funding halted. In the early morning hours, Israeli border police, backed by the IDF, removed two unoccupied outposts, Havat Shaged and Givat Hapiryon. Later that morning, the Israeli AG, Meni Mazuz, ordered the Ministry of Construction and Housing to cease all settlement funding until a supervisory mechanism is put in place to prevent monies from being transferred to outposts. End summary.

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AG ORDERS FUNDING FOR SETTLEMENTS STOPPED  
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[1](#)2. (C) Reacting to the contents of a not yet publicly released Israeli Comptrollers report, AG Meni Mazuz ordered, on April 15, the Ministry of Construction and Housing (MCH) to cease all funding to Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Mazuz's order was reportedly in response to the upcoming Comptrollers Report, which, according to Peace Now General Secretary Yariv Oppenheimer (who claims he was leaked the report's relevant contents), contains a section on the improper flow of money through government ministries to unauthorized outposts. The order received by the MCH also reportedly contains a warning to Israeli bureaucrats that the misappropriation of funds to support unauthorized activities, such as outposts, is a prosecutable offense. According to the press, funding to settlements will be restored once the ministry implements a monitoring mechanism, approved by the AG's office, that prevents unlawful disbursements to outposts.

[1](#)3. (C) Oppenheimer was pleased by the AG's action and called attention to what he termed the exasperation reflected in the order. Oppenheimer pointed out that the AG did not tell the MCH "to shut down this or that program" that was benefiting outposts, but instead ordered the stoppage of all funds to settlements. Oppenheimer opined that the opaque nature of settlement and outpost funding forced the AG to use a hammer instead of a scalpel. Oppenheimer claims the Comptroller's findings implicate more government ministries than just the MCH, but that the MCH's activities were the most apparent. In fact, according to the press, the AG sent a copy of the order to the other ministries warning them to implement similar monitoring mechanisms within their own structures to protect themselves from prosecution. Oppenheimer hopes that the AG's action today is the start of greater government accountability on settlement spending, but cautioned that "we should wait and see."

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Two Outposts Removed, Fight For Two Other Sites Continues  
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[1](#)4. (C) The two outposts removed by the Israeli border police, Havat Shaged and Givat Hapiryon, were originally ordered removed in December 2003, but court challenges by settlers prohibited the GOI from taking action at that time. The Israeli High Court of Justice's ruling on March 22 (see reftels) rejected the settler's appeal and permitted the GOI to undertake removal. An IDF official confirmed to Embassy DAO that the two outposts were removed in the early morning hours of April 15. Havat Shaged was a small, unoccupied outpost located south of the settlement of Yizhar, comprised of a small makeshift structure. Givat Hapiryon (Hill of Productivity) is probably what USG settlement experts refer to as Havat Maon (Tel Tavani), whose removal was authorized by the March 22 decision. The Border Police removed three containers and two bus "skeletons" from the site. During the removals the police arrested seven settlers who hurled stones and scuffled with the officers attempting to remove the outpost. One officer was reported to be lightly injured.

15. (U) Settlers succeeded on April 14, yet again, in re-establishing two outposts near Hebron, Hazon David and Giborim. The IDF evacuated Hazon David the first time on March 31 after the Israeli High Court rejected the settlers' last possible legal appeal (reftel). According to Israeli press reports and conversations with a settler activist on April 14, the settlers reestablished the site. "The outpost is still there, and we are now making a new one, which will be Western Hazon David," Shimon Riklin, a veteran of the illegal outpost movement, told PolOff April 14. "In fact," joked Riklin, "there will be three Hazon Davids: the old one, the new one, and the army!" (Note: Riklin meant that the army will have to maintain a presence near the site if it wants to prevent outpost expansion in the area. End note.) On the morning of April 15, the IDF and Border Police returned to dismantle the two outposts and were met by significant resistance from outpost supporters.

16. (C) Settlers and soldiers clashed at the site on April 13 as well, according to a report in the Israeli daily Ha'aretz. The newspaper reported that hundreds of soldiers and policemen had arrived at the spot after suspending operations in the area over the Passover holiday. The army closed off the entire area, which prevented the Palestinians who own the land on which the outpost sits from getting to their property, according to Ha'aretz. (Note: The IDF has removed the outpost eight times since March 31, according to the press, but the settlers continue to rebuild the site. The Hebron settlers are known for their resolve on outposts. They have rebuilt the Giborim outpost between Hebron and Kiryat Arba over 15 times. End note.)

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